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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2012

The last days?

William Thomas takes a guess
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Empowering girls

Lucy Doll program helps teens
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New Year skate

Say goodbye to 2012 on the ice
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His line, anyway

Colin Mochrie speaks at Roselawn
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INPORTNEWS



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■ EMERGENCY SERVICES

Wainfleet paramedics 'working out great'

DAVE JOHNSON
InPort News Staff

WAINFLEET — While its goal is to cut down response times to emergency calls, a paramedic community response unit stationed in the township will do much more than that.

"A good chunk of our time will be getting out and talking with the residents of Wainfleet," said Danny Kerr, one of five advanced-care paramedics based out of the main fire hall on Park St.

The paramedic community response unit has been in place for a month now and

came about earlier this year after a conversation between Mayor April Jeffs, Niagara EMS chief John Cunnane, Niagara EMS deputy chief Kevin Smith and Val Jaeger, Niagara's medical officer of health.

see **PARAMEDICS** | page 2

Danny Kerr is one of five Niagara EMS advanced care paramedics based out Wainfleet's main fire hall on Park St. A paramedic community response unit has been operating in the township for about a month now.



DAVE JOHNSON Staff Photo

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upfront

■ PARAMEDICS

Community interaction

FROM PAGE 1

Jeffs and fire Chief Harry Flagg were concerned over long response times to emergency calls in Watnifeet and wanted to find a solution.

Response times in Watnifeet for paramedics, coming from Port Colborne or Welland buses, and occasionally Dunnville, were between 19 and 20 minutes for 2011 and most of 2012.

The response time the region wants in rural regions, like Watnifeet, is under 15 minutes and 59 seconds 90% of the time.

The paramedic community response unit will vastly cut down that response time, whether the paramedic is at the fire hall or out on the road.

Flagg said the unit has already proven its worth, with one of the paramedics coming across a car crash before the fire service or Niagara Regional Police were even alerted.

"I can be first on scene in five or six minutes ... be there before firefighters" said Kerr, who was previously stationed in neighbouring West Lincoln.

Driving an SUV outfitted with what an advanced-care paramedic needs, Kerr can move quickly about the township and communicate back

to dispatchers whether more emergency resources are needed.

He can quickly assess patients and determine whether they even need to go to a hospital. Not all calls the paramedics respond to will be emergency calls.

The unit will operate 12 hours a day, seven days a week and be manned by five advanced-care paramedics, who can place IVs and intubate patients for example. Two of the paramedics will be full time in Watnifeet, while the other three are replacements who will fill in as needed.

Michael Sanderson, Niagara EMS deputy chief-associate to a director, said the system in place for ambulances to respond to calls, is also in the SUV.

The dispatch system shows all the roads in the township and the location of the call on a screen in the vehicle, and is one of the most advanced in the province.

While Kerr has worked in a rural setting before, he wasn't all that familiar with Watnifeet. He has been out driving around, learning the roads and meeting with business owners and residents.

Interacting with the community and trying to fill in some of the gaps in health care is the paramedic com-

munity response unit's goal.

"I want to hear from the community," Kerr said.

Kerr said advanced-care paramedics could monitor people in the community and if a red flag popped up, suggest the person go see their family doctor or make a trip to the hospital.

Cunnane said if, for example, one of the paramedics was sent to the home of a diabetic, they could assess the patient and determine whether or not a trip to the hospital is necessary. Knowing where that patient lived, paramedics could stop in and check up on them in the future.

While the paramedics will interact with the community, they'll also be working closely with Watnifeet's volunteer firefighters.

Flagg says that as a real benefit to his crew, especially as they'll be working with the same paramedics all the time.

"We can watch and see what they are doing and they can provide us with feedback. My firefighters are very inquisitive and have already told me they are learning," said Flagg, adding paramedics have adjusted their shifts to match with firefighter training nights.

"It's working out great."

dave.johnson@sunmedia.ca

■ ECONOMY: Canadian shipping industry looking ahead



JULIE JOCSAK QMI Agency Niagara
The Cuyhoga made its way past the Homer Bridge on the opening day of the Welland Canal on March 22. Shipping volumes have increased over the past three years after economic turmoil in 2009.

Seaway cruises into calmer waters

DON FRASER
QMI Agency Niagara

ST. CATHARINES — How the tide has changed for the St. Lawrence Seaway over the past three years.

Sail back to 2009 and the world was in economic turmoil, the bulk-carrier business was sinking and commercial shipments floundered.

A slow recovery since then has been kind to the Seaway, and its 43-km Welland Canal so vital to Niagara's economy.

"Certainly '09 was quite a

difficult year, and we were at the trough of the great financial crisis," said St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corp. spokesman Andrew Bogora. "And that was reflected in the Seaway's tonnage."

Bogora said volumes have "built incrementally, every year."

This year, the Seaway foresees ending the year at around 38 million tonnes of cargo.

And two of the major drivers in this year's turnaround — iron ore and cleaner coal.

That iron ore is exported via

the Seaway to Asia's booming economies.

Meanwhile, an especially clean variety of coal is being shipped from Montana and Wyoming's Powder River Basin, and prized by European markets.

"The coal is a reflection of how Europeans prize high-quality, low-sulphur coal," Bogora said. "When you burn this coal in European power plants it has minimal environmental impact."

see SEAWAY | page 3



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portraits

■ SEAWAY

Canal suited for oversized cargoes

FROM PAGE 2

In nearby Hamilton, its port also recently attracted 103-year-old Canadian-owned grain trading company Parrish and Heimbecker. It has completed the first phase of a modern and cutting-edge grain terminal.

Bogora said it "speaks well" to the Seaway's growing importance to the grain trade and the confidence it and other companies have shown in the Seaway's future.

He said the mining and renewable power sector — such as wind turbines — is also ramping up Seaway tonnage

volumes.

This, as the Seaway is especially suited to moving the larger, oversized cargoes of infrastructure these sectors require.

It's that asset that made the moving of the decommissioned Ojibwa submarine to Port Burwell possible in late November.

"It speaks to the Seaway's versatility," Bogora said. "And how we are the most favoured means of moving these large pieces of project cargo."

Algoma Central Corp. is among a number of marine

businesses to benefit from the Seaway recovery.

"Certainly everyone was impacted in 2008, 2009; it was an economy in freefall," said Greg Wight, president and CEO of St. Catharines-based Algoma.

"We have certainly bounced back from there."

Wight also pointed to iron ore export and coal volumes as being two current Seaway volume-drivers.

As for its Canadian fleet of 33 dry bulk vessels and product tankers, "we've improved each year from 2008, with 2012

probably the same as 2011," he said.

Eight new state-of-the-art ships on order will also join Algoma's fleet next year.

"Virtually all of our fleet has been employed," Wight said. "There were a few weak spots in the summer, but we are seeing good employment of our vessels."



WILLY WATERTON QMI Agency
Greg Wight, president and CEO of Algoma Central Corporation.

WELLAND CANAL END-OF-SEASON CLOSURE

Seaway spokesman Andrew Bogora says if demand warrants it and weather is favourable it will happen midnight on Dec. 30.

WELLAND CANAL CARGO TRAFFIC IN TONNES

- 2008 – 33.58 million tonnes
- 2009 – 26.38 million
- 2010 – 29.18 million
- 2011 – 29.65 million

■ ARTS PLACE: New exhibit launches Saturday

A Festival of Colour for drab winter days

DAVE JOHNSON
InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — Arts Place Gallery is adding a splash of colour into the dull, dreary days of December and January with its newest exhibition.

The Festival of Colour kicks off Saturday and runs until Sunday, Jan. 27.

Work being hung at the gallery includes a mix of past and present gallery artists, including gallery founder Joyce Honsberger, Cathy Peters, Dorothy Butchered, Doug Carter and David Spengler.

Each of the artists work in different mediums. There's oil paintings, water colours, glass work and mixed media.

Carter this week was hanging a few of his watercolour paintings — a mix of greens and one full of fall colours.

On the wall of the gallery at 714 King St. are a couple of Honsberger's mixed-media pieces. One of her larger pieces was made out

of fibre, twine and monofilament and is full of different colours. Another piece viewed from a certain angle looks much like a Christmas stocking.

Spengler's work was also being hung on the wall, and it, too, is very colourful.

The retired priest was at the opening reception for the exhibit on Sunday from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. and he reflected on the Christmas story.

"It will be a great time," said Honsberger, adding the reception is also a way of thanking all of the gallery's loyal patrons.

The gallery is open Thursday through Sunday noon to 4:30 p.m. until Dec. 23 and switches to winter hours starting Friday, Jan. 4, when hours will be Friday through Sunday, noon to 4:30 p.m.

The gallery can be reached at 905-834-9060 and found at www.artsplacegallery.com.

davejohnson@sunmedia.ca



Arts Place Gallery's Festival of Colour exhibition kicks off Saturday and runs until Sunday, Jan. 27. Joyce Honsberger, artist and gallery founder, stands by one of her pieces on the gallery's wall.

DAVE JOHNSON Staff Photo

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John Tobton, publisher, print & digital
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Ourview

Speech alone is not a crime

There is a maxim, usually attributed to Benjamin Franklin, that is worth remembering: "Any society that would give up a little liberty to gain a little security will deserve neither and lose both."

It has a particular resonance for Canadians this week as the Supreme Court upheld Canada's post 9/11 anti-terrorist laws, squashing the challenges of three men convicted of crimes connected to terrorism.

Two of them appear to be no-brainers. Two alleged sympathizers of the Tamil Tigers of Sri Lanka trying to avoid extradition to the United States, where they are wanted for helping provide weapons and equipment to the organization. It's the case of the third defendant — Mohammed Momin Khawaja of Ottawa — that we should pay attention to.

He was convicted using the so-called "motive" clause of Canada's anti-terrorism law.

The law allows for someone to be convicted if they express support for a terrorist organization, even if that person isn't involved in an actual violent act of terrorism.

Khawaja certainly expressed support for terrorism. He was found guilty on a number of charges connected to a 2004 bomb plot in the U.K., but the motive clause is what turned his punishment into a life sentence.

It's one thing to convict someone on evidence of criminal activity. But to send someone to prison for an opinion, even a vile one, goes too far.

It has long been understood that motive is but part of the evidence used to find someone guilty of a crime. On its own, however, motive is little more than an expression of an opinion or someone's state of mind.

To put it another way, a bloody knife with fingerprints can be enough to convict someone, but motive on its own is not a crime.

Khawaja was already guilty of other offenses and sentenced to prison for them. The problem is his motives, his statements of support for known terrorists, aren't aggravating factors in his sentencing, but are crimes in and of themselves under Canadian law.

That should be unacceptable to all of us.

A person should not ever be sent to prison merely for words he said or things he thought. Khawaja was not being convicted for masterminding a bomb plot, or offering instructions on how to kill people. He was offering some rather distasteful positive comments about the worst terrorists on earth.

But if we truly value free speech, then we ought not have laws finding people guilty for saying awful things.

Otherwise we are not in favour of free speech, and this is something our federal politicians need to start trying to hear.

■ COLUMN: I've been thinking

PASTOR GORD ABRAHAM
Port Colborne Baptist Church

Don't look around you or within! Don't listen to or watch any news or else you will become depressed, fearful, cynical or worse yet, want to run out and buy all your fears away at the shopping malls, only to get back to reality after the rush and sentimentality of Christmas is over.

If you do jump right in to the news and get a taste of what human nature without God is really like, then you may begin to take on the pose of Edward Munch's famous painting "The Scream."

Conflicts in the Syria, Egypt, Israel, Iran, North Korea, Africa, just to mention a sampling. Closer to home, regular shootings by distraught, desperate people venting their anger on innocent people through violent acts.

Closer still, look right in your own home, family and

marriage. If you really want a scare, look within.

What on earth is going on? Where is all the "peace on earth, good will to men" stuff that is played out in the background of our frenetic shopping malls? Something isn't right here! There is very little peace that we can see or experience. Why?

We have rejected the "King." No, not Elvis, the Real "King." We have all turned to our own ways, denying God completely or else giving God lip service as we retain control of our own lives, plans and programs. In spite of all the control we think we have on our own, we cannot get away from the gut awareness that something is really wrong, things are not the way they are supposed to be and we cannot do anything about it.

Better yet, jump right into some other news! The Good News message of Christmas. Its lead idea is that God has come to earth, has come to live among us, has come in flesh to take back his creation,

one person at a time. He has come to bear the results of our rebellion, sin and desperation on himself — to die for us, in our place. This really is Good News!

The angel messenger announced this event, of God the Creator becoming flesh through human birth, to a group of second-class citizens of their day — shepherds. They were told, "Don't be afraid. I'm here to announce a great and joyful event that is meant for everybody, worldwide. A Savior has just been born in David's town, a Savior who is Messiah and Master."

God has entered the world, broken, fractured, distraught, pain-filled world to offer his rule in our lives. The very world and people he created, who have rejected his gracious, loving rule and reign. The very people who rejected his rule over their lives to "do our own thing" while muddling along. He has come to us to show what God in flesh is like and how his rule in our lives is

infinitely superior to our self-determined mess.

When Jesus — God in flesh came — he came to live, and offer his life as the sacrifice for our sin and rebellion. The best Christmas present offered this year is the gift of God's Son.

Bow the knee to Him. It will be your best Christmas ever. "This is how much God loved the world: He gave his Son, his one and only Son. And this is why: so that no one need be destroyed; by believing in him, anyone can have a whole and lasting life. God didn't go to all the trouble of sending his Son merely to point an accusing finger, telling the world how bad it was. He came to help, to put the world right again. Anyone who trusts in him is acquitted; anyone who believes in the Son who has long since been under the wrath sentence without knowing it. And why? Because of that person's failure to believe in the one of a kind Son of God when introduced to him." (John 3:16-18 The Message)

■ HUMOUR: William Thomas

Sure signs the end of the world is nigh

As you may or may not be aware, after a long time we will end in just a few days. Do not panic! Seriously, it was going to hell in a hand basket anyway, so think of this as an act of mercy like putting down an old dog whose organs have all but shut down.

Dec. 21, 2012, will mark the final day of the Mayan calendar and therefore the end of the world. Coincidentally, Dec. 21 also marks The Very Last Day of Crazy Ridiculous 50¢ Off Everything in the Freshin' Store Sale for many North American chain and retail outlets.

So take your pick — you can get slapped to death trying to haul a fat screen



WILLIAM THOMAS
HUMOUR

high-def TV from the shelf to the cash register or sit quietly at home as the walls come down tumbling around you.

Nobody is sure exactly how the world will end but since the creation of this planet, there have never been more options: an all-out nuclear war; an English soccer match; the first snowfall in Toronto triggering 500 fender benders worldwide; a SARS-like epidemic that is spread by gossip; a fatal attack on Earth from the planet

Uranus which once and for all answers the question: "What happened to D.B. Cooper?", a complete failure of the world to communicate caused by a 14-year-old kid from New Jersey who hacks into North Korea's computer headquarters and erases

Kim Jong-un's collection of naughty photos; a direct hit from a massive asteroid from outer space while not one of Hollywood's action heroes is available to stop it; or an English soccer match gone viral.

Maybe Y2K returns and really means it this time. May the Nostradamus finally nails it or the biblical dreams of Daniel finally come home to roost. Or maybe Friday, Dec. 21, is the day the sun simply runs out of gas.

Due to the absence of any day on the Mayan calendar past Dec. 21, 2012, many believe a planetary cataclysmic phenomenon will occur, comprised of a death-dealing series of eschatological events.

"Eschatological" — a word culled from thelayan hieroglyphic form of writing meaning "crappy."

For whatever reason the Apocalypse of 2012 is now upon us and there is nothing we can really do except max out our credit cards, drink heavily and hope for the best. And if the world does not end on Dec. 21, I would want to be in the baby delivering business in the middle of next July.

see WILLIAM THOMAS | page 5

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■ WILLIAM THOMAS

Making the Last Days long days

FROM PAGE 4

This transformative global Armageddon at the end of the 5125-year-long Mesamerican Long Count Calendar resulting in the death of seven billion earthy citizens is what Wolf Blitzer would call a "gimme changer." Wolf has already begun to hermetically seal his Situation Room. The problem is getting to the Crisis Crucible where the toilet is located.

Whether you believe the world will end in a matter of days or not, it pays to be vigilant. Among the signs, the tell-tale indicators that Mother Earth is on life-support and about to pull her own plug.

It is to happen, various astronomical alignments will begin to shift. The Earth will slowly enter into a slow but irreversible death spiral into the black hole at the centre of the galaxy. Before it happens Madonna, dressed as a nun, will put out one last music video just to annoy the Pope. As dark clouds settle upon the planet, expect a

spokesman for al-Qaida to claim responsibility for the event and Pat Robertson to place the blame on gay marriage.

Watch for all those scraggly old men, the purveyors of doom, standing on street corners with signs that no longer say "The End Is Near" but now read "We Told You So."

Expect Drapery Outlet to stage an End of the World Drape Sale with Paul Anka singing: "And now the end is near and so I face the final curtain." All sales will be final.

Look for Martha Stewart to do a one-hour special on hand crafting funeral wreaths in which she drops two hand-painted Robin's eggs and without thinking says: "Hey! It's not the end of the world!"

Look for NBC's weatherman Al Roker to predict that Friday will start out cold and foggy with a 50% chance of an afternoon.

Watch for doom-struck headlines proclaiming "Rob Ford's days are really numbered now" and the L.A. Times announcing: "O.J. this

one's for you!"

Watch for people with high cholesterol trading in their Lipitor and Crestor tablets for that 1,200-calorie KFC Double Down Sandwich that contains no bread.

Anticipate that Victoria's Secret will finally give up the secret of its success: "Horny men!"

Watch for Silvio Berlusconi to throw a toga party. Look for Gary Bettman to give NHL players his "final, final" offer which they will turn down in favour of sudden death overtime. See the Raptors win a game and Gary Bassey say something coherent as everything in the cosmos reverses itself.

Spot the viral YouTube video "You're Fired!" in which St. Peter kicks Donald Trump's sorry butt out and over the Peary Gates.

Me? I'm planning to spend Friday, Dec. 21, with Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper. That way it's sure to be the longest day of my life.

I'm fairly certain the world will end on Friday, the real

and final Black Friday. But in case I'm wrong — have a great Christmas everybody and a happy new year.

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VICTORIA GRAY Staff Photo

Students at Port Colborne High School spent 10 weeks learning how to boost their confidence and self-esteem with the Lucy Doll program. From left: Emily Chaytor, Olivia Carr, school nurse Jan Weaver, Sara Murray, Tiffany Borland and social work student intern Carleen Cizmar.

■ **BODY IMAGE:** Port High students emerge more self-confident

Lucy Doll empowers teen girls

VICTORIA GRAY
InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — Olivia Carr struggled with body image and fitting in with the popular crowd.

The Grade 11 student at Port Colborne High School thought she had to have as many friends as possible and constantly felt like she had to impress people.

Now she knows she only has to be herself.

"I'm myself and I should be fine with that and really I am now," she said.

Carr is among a group of about 10 girls who met every Thursday for 10 weeks to talk about communication, self-esteem, body image, media influence, beauty and much more.

Emily Chaytor, also a Grade 11 student, said participating in the group helped her become more confident.

"I know people feel the same way about these issues as me and now I see myself in a much better light," she said.

While in the female group, students decorated four-foot wooden Lucy Dolls, silhouettes that were cut out by one of the school's carpentry classes.

Throughout the program the dolls became decorated symbols of what the girls liked about themselves and who they are on the inside.

The Lucy Doll program was facilitated

at Port High by Laurier University social work student Carleen Cizmar, who's completing an internship with Niagara Regional Public Health. She wanted to help empower girls.

"When I was in high school I really wished there was something like this," Cizmar said. "People don't realize how much teens struggle with stress and body image."

Cizmar said it's important for young women to understand that diversity among people, especially girls is a positive thing.

The school's public health nurse Cizmar was paired with, Jan Weaver, loved the program concept.

"We are all the same, but different on the inside," she said, adding she was amazed at how well the dolls represented each participant by the time they had been fully decorated.

"We had a limited amount of items to decorate the dolls with and they all came out very different."

Some of the dolls will be displayed in storefront windows in Port Colborne, including Something Else at West and Clarence Sts. for the next few weeks and Arts Place Gallery on King St. in the new year.

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■ CHRISTMAS IN CONCERT



MARYANNE FIRTH Staff Photo
The St. John Bosco Catholic School choir brought the Christmas spirit to Port Colborne city hall on Monday night, singing holiday tunes for a standing-room-only crowd in council chambers.

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■ **HEALTHY LIVING:** Contest runs until Jan. 4

PORTicipate and become the face of the new wellness centre

InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — The city has launched a new initiative to encourage families to participate in fun, active, healthy lifestyles.

"The name of the game is PORTicipation," said Mayor Vance Badawey.

On Feb. 16, the city will open

doors to the Vale Health and Wellness Centre.

"This state-of-the-art facility for sport, recreation, wellness, entertainment and commerce will be a community focal point that contributes to an active lifestyle for our residents and visitors," Badawey said.

With the ultimate goal of creat-

ing healthier generations, the Vale Health and Wellness Centre, in conjunction with the YMCA, are challenging families to show how they PORTicipate as a family to stay active and lead a healthy lifestyle.

PORTicipate runs until Friday, Jan. 4, and the city will select an official healthy family to represent the new health and wellness

centre.

The winning family will be a part of the community celebration in February, will be included in marketing materials for the facility and will receive a one-year family membership to the YMCA (as defined on the YMCA website). Second prize is a family season pass for skating and third prize is a family season

pass to Nickel Beach.

"This is a great first step to involve local families in anticipation of the opening of the Port Colborne YMCA and the Vale Health and Wellness Centre," said Janet St. Amand, interim CEO of YMCA of Niagara. "Open to all, this new Y will strengthen families and the community as a whole."

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

■ Contest forms can be found at www.portcolborne.ca, city hall, Roselawn Centre and Westside Arena. Completed entries may be submitted at city hall to the attention of the mayor's office, e-mailed to participation@portcolborne.ca, or mailed to The Mayor's Office, City of Port Colborne, 66 Charlotte St., Port Colborne, L3K 3C8.

■ Share your story of what you are doing to be healthy as a family. The city is looking for stories accompanied by a photo that show how your family lives a healthy lifestyle. Included in your submission must be: A photo of your family and a story, not exceeding 500 words, on how your family PARTICIPATES.

■ The photo and story must fit into one of two categories: healthy eating or healthy activities with photos illustrating just that.

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■ COMMUNITY EVENT

Skating into the new year

InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — Westside Arena will be packed with family-friendly fun this holiday season.

Residents are invited to the arena to say goodbye to 2012 at Ingression's annual

Kidz Carnival on New Year's Eve, from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Along with free skating, the event will include face painting, cookie decorating, games, a mad scientist show and fireworks at 5:30 p.m.

Over the holidays, the

city will also host a number of free skates — sponsored by Tim Hortons — on the following dates: Thursday, Dec. 27, from 2 p.m. to 3:20 p.m.; Friday, Dec. 28, from 2 p.m. to 4:20 p.m.; Wednesday, Jan. 2, from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.; Thursday,

Jan. 3, from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.; and Friday, Jan. 4, from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

A full list of public skating dates and times, as well as other on-ice activities are available on the city's website at www.portcolborne.ca/page/arenas.



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DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

Unfortunately mixing alcohol with certain types of prescription medications can be dangerous. Alcohol can increase the risk of severe CNS depression when taken with opioids, benzodiazepines and barbituates. Alcohol can also affect drug metabolism (breakdown to active components), or the absorption of some drugs. Chronic alcohol intake can also cause problems with certain medications because of the effect it has on the liver and specific drug metabolizing enzymes.

Chronic alcohol use increases acetaminophen (Tylenol) metabolism increasing its conversion to metabolites toxic to the liver. It is always best not to exceed four grams of acetaminophen a day, especially if you are a heavy or binge drinker because of the damage it can due to your liver.

Chronic alcohol use along with NSAIDs (Ibuprofen) or aspirin can increase the risk of GI bleeds. However, an occasional drink with NSAID use is not likely an issue.

If you are a patient on warfarin alcohol can inhibit warfarin metabolism and increase your INR. If you change your usual alcohol intake you should have your INR checked.

Certain antibiotics, and in particular metronidazole, has the potential when mixed with alcohol to make people quite ill. When taken to together a patient may experience low blood pressure, shortness of breath, facial flushing, and nausea.

Diabetic patients taking hypoglycemics such as Gylburide or insulin are at risk of severe hypoglycemia (low blood sugar) when they drink alcohol. These patients should limit alcohol to an occasional single drink.

Any patient on medication for sleeping should be careful of alcohol consumption because of the additive affects of drowsiness and respiratory depression. Patients have been known to aspirate their own vomit and die from intoxication. This could be more likely to happen if a person mixes alcohol with their sleep medication.

This same problem could exist when patients mix alcohol and opiates.

It is always wise to consult your pharmacist or physician if you receive a new prescription and intend to have a few alcoholic beverages. Also please notify your physician or pharmacist if you are a chronic drinker. Even if you are not planning to drink while taking your prescription previous liver damage could affect how well you metabolize your medication. This could result in too high, or too low a dose for you.

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■ EDUCATION: Steele Street students run storefront



DAVE JOHNSON Staff Photo

Steele Street School Grade 6 students Reagan Grano, left, and Preston Davis show two of the items up for raffle in Santa's Workshop at the school. Funds raised by the workshop were to be donated to Port Cares.

Learning through Santa's Workshop

DAVE JOHNSON
InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — Grade 6 students at Steele Street School have been busy in Santa's Workshop, setting out baked goods, and placing price tags on various toys, books and other items.

Santa's Workshop, and Mrs. Claus Bakery, was put together by teacher Chrys Fraipont's Grade 6 class and it was set up as a fundraiser for Port Cares.

"This was started three weeks

ago," said Fraipont, of getting a room in the school's basement set up for the workshop.

The teacher said she likes to do one big project a year and this year it was decided to do Santa's Workshop. Last year, she and the students set up a restaurant inside the school's gym in conjunction with The Smokin' Buddha.

For the latest project, students had to sort items into different categories and price everything out.

Students brought in baked goods, which were selling for 50 cents apiece or three for \$1, and all

sorts of other items.

"Some are re-gifs, they've never been opened before," she said, adding other items were donated for raffles.

Fraipont said 10 students at a time were going to be allowed into the workshop throughout the school day Wednesday, so the students manning it wouldn't be overwhelmed.

By the end of the day, students had raised more than \$700 for Port Cares.

dave.johnson@sunmedia.ca

■ **ADMINISTRATION:** Wuisman returning to private sector

Wainfleet loses operations director

DAVE JOHNSON
InPort News Staff

WAINFLEET — Getting fibreglass composite bridges installed, making sure the arena opened this year and getting the township's on-site sewage inspection program underway are just some of the highlights Greg Wuisman is proud of as his time in Wainfleet winds down.

Wuisman handed in his resignation on Friday. He will finish working with Wainfleet on Friday, Dec. 21, taking a short break before he starts his new job on Jan. 7.

Wainfleet's director of operations is headed to Golder Associates, an international firm with an office in St. Catharines that opened eight months ago. "I'll mainly be doing business development... that's what they want me to work on. I'll also work on some projects out of the Mississauga office."

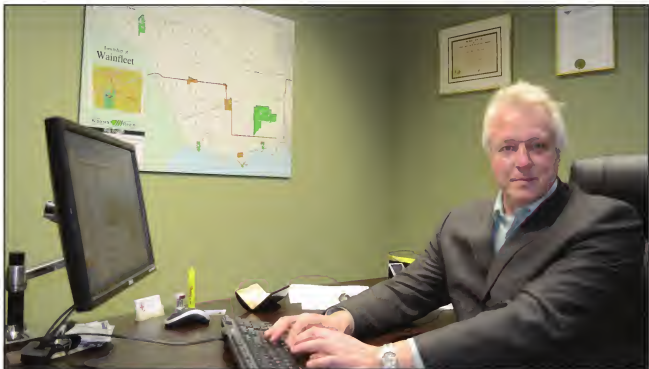
Golder Associates provides consulting, design and construction services in earth, environment and related areas of energy.

While his new role will be different than being director of operations — which encompassed building maintenance, cemeteries, drainage, private sewage regulation, public works, recreation and roads — Wuisman was working in private industry before he started in Wainfleet.

"I came from a company that did something similar to Golder. I've been in Wainfleet just shy of five years. It's been a fun experience."

Wainfleet said one of his highlights with the municipality was getting two fibreglass composite bridges installed — the first in Niagara. The composite bridges cut down on construction time and last decades longer than traditional concrete spans are lighter. "It was a really cool project."

With an estimate of \$500,000 to meet fire code deficiencies



DAVE JOHNSON Staff Photo
which provides

Greg Wuisman, Wainfleet's director of operations, is leaving the township on Dec. 21 to take a position with private firm Golder Associates, which provides consulting, design and construction services in earth, environment and related areas of energy.

all of it digital."

Before he left, Wuisman had one council meeting left to attend, on Dec. 18.

"Although Wainfleet's a small community, it's had a lot of issues that have been very interesting," he said, adding he'll miss it.

Mayor April Jeffs and township CAO Scott Luey said Wuisman's position won't be filled by a replacement.

"In the past we've heard comments from the public questioning the complement of staff we have," said Jeffs. "It's

worth a try to see if we can spread Greg's duties across other staff and senior management. We're going to try it on a trial basis and see how it goes."

Luey said the issue of replacing Wuisman will be dealt with by council and part of the discussion will be in-camera as any decisions made could affect other departments and personnel.

"If needed, we'll use a consultant to bridge any gaps," said Luey.

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■ **VALE CENTRE:** Prime-time hours booked for arena that doesn't open until February

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MARYANNE FIRTH
InPort News Staff

been pushed back to fall 2013.

The city's current plan for the centre is to keep ice in one pad year round and to remove the ice from the other pad from the beginning of May to end of August.

Summer ice rental time has been booked with Pierre Groulx, goaltending coach for the Montreal Canadiens, who will run a highly-anticipated elite goaltending school during the last week of July.

maryanne.firth@sunmedia.ca

Twitter: @
mfirthTribune

PORT COLBORNE — The city's new ice pads are receiving a warm welcome from local user groups.

Vale Health and Wellness Centre hasn't even opened its doors and yet city staff have been successful in booking 100% of prime-time ice.

Both arenas are booked from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays, as well as from 2 p.m. to 11 p.m. Mondays to Fridays.

Harry Hakim, Port Colborne's manager of community services, outlined for city council Monday night the programming progress that's been made in recent months.

There are still a few non-prime time hours available, although city staff are working hard to see those slots filled, he said.

Difficulty lies mainly in filling daytime slots, which often remain unused due to work and school commitments, Hakim said. If the demand is there, ice can be made available as early as 7 a.m., he added.

The Vale Centre is set to open in February.

When the facility was initially proposed, council discussed having figure skating and girls' hockey at the centre, said Ward 1 Coun. Dave Elliott, who questioned why those activities were absent from a presented list of ice-time users.

Hakim said staff are in discussion with different organizations in hopes of seeing those activities take off in Port Colborne.

Ward 1 Coun. Bill Steele, also the president of Port Colborne Minor Hockey Association, said work is underway to get a girls hockey division started. The hope was to get it off the ground this season, but due to some unforeseen delays it has

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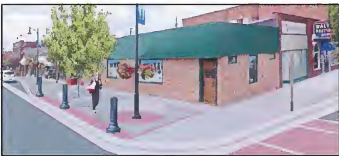
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■ **REVITALIZATION:** Detailed designs completed for Port Colborne

VICTORIA GRAY Staff Photo

The intersection of Clarence and West streets may have curb extensions in its future. The detailed design of Port Colborne's Downtown Central Business District Community Improvement Plan area was endorsed by city council Monday night.

Pretty plan pedestrian-friendly

MARYANNE FIRTH
InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — It is a glimpse into what the future could hold for Port Colborne's downtown core.

Councillors were presented the recently-completed detailed streetscape design of the Downtown Central Business District Community Improvement Plan area.

The design came together following more than a year of collaboration between city staff, the Downtown Business Improvement Area board and consulting firm AECOM.

It includes not only the installation of decorative boulevards, crosswalks, benches, trees and streetlights, but also significant infrastructure improvements including new roads, sidewalks, storm and sanitary sewers and watermain.

The project also focused on maintaining and maximizing on-street parking — a factor deemed important by the public and business community during the consultation process, said Gord Shields.

The senior project manager with Aecom, the consulting firm hired to create the design, outlined highlights of the project for council, including the installation of curb extensions and decorative crosswalks in the area's primary intersections.

"With the design of the curbs, we're trying to improve the sight lines of the intersections," Shields said, adding they also add to the safety of the intersections for pedestrians.

The intention of the design, he said, is to make the downtown area "more pedestrian-friendly."

The design also includes the potential to have street names imprinted on sidewalks, similar to what is seen on Main St. following its recent redesign, Shields said.

Benches, streetlights and garbage containers also mimic that of Main St., which will help reduce ongoing maintenance costs and allow the city an interchangeable inventory for both sections of the city.

The design has been broken down into 15 stages to allow work to be com-

pleted progressively as funds become available, Shields said. Infrastructure and streetscape finishes will be completed in each stage before moving on to the next.

The first stage of the project, he said, is recommended to include Charlotte, West and King Sts. Cost estimates are available for each stage of the project to assist the city with its implementation plan, Shields said.

This will allow the city to budget accordingly as portions of the project move forward, he added.

Included in the design are a series of bollards found on the decorative boulevards. Ward 4 Coun. Barbara Butters questioned their purpose and shared concerns that they may make the streetscape look too busy.

The bollards are used to separate the pedestrian environment from the roadway, Shields said in response, adding they also serve an "aesthetic purpose."

Ward 2 Coun. Angie Desmarais questioned why bike lanes were not included in the design, despite the inclusion of bike racks along the promenade.

With on-street parking and narrow roadways, bike lanes were not feasible nor safe to be included in the design, Shields said.

Council unanimously approved the endorsement of the design. Ward 3 Coun. Bea Kenny was absent from the meeting.

maryanne.firth@sunmedia.ca
Twitter: @mfirthTribune

IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Downtown Central Business District Community Improvement Plan area is bounded by West St. to the east, Fielden Ave. to the west, Elgin and King Sts. to the north and Victoria St. to the south.

Information on the plan, including illustrations, can be found in the city council committee meeting agenda for Dec. 10 at www.portcolborne.ca/pages/minutes_and_agendas.

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Shawna Goddard, Vice President of Scotiabank's Hamilton & Niagara District, and Scotiabank Niagara branch champions visit the CT Simulator Suite in the Walker Family Cancer Centre with NHS Medical Director of Oncology Dr. Janice Giesbrecht (2nd from right). The suite, which is being named in Scotiabank's honour, houses the CT Simulator which is an important piece of equipment in the radiation therapy planning process.

Scotiabank Supports Cancer Care

Representatives from local Scotiabank branches presented a gift of \$80,000 to the Niagara Health System *It's Our Time* Campaign in support of the regional Walker Family Cancer Centre.

The gift is part of the Scotiabank Bright Future philanthropic program and is a joint initiative between the Bank's thirteen Niagara branches that have pledged \$250,000 over five years to help fund enhanced services for cancer patients in Niagara.

The CT Simulator Suite (photographed above) in the new cancer centre will be named in recognition of Scotiabank's commitment.

"We are thrilled with the generous response we have received from our customers and employees across Niagara who have come on board this Scotiabank Bright Future fundraising campaign to help us raise funds for the regional Walker Family Cancer Centre," says Shawna Goddard, Vice President of Scotiabank's Hamilton and Niagara District. "This early support has allowed us to greatly exceed the \$50,000 goal we set for our first year of fundraising by \$30,000 to help bring more cancer care services closer to home for the people of Niagara."

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FREEZE COMING?

PORT COLBORNE — In light of Niagara's regional councillors scrapping plans to give themselves raises next year, Port Colborne councillors may look into following suit.

Ward 1 Coun. Dave Elliott told his fellow councillors that considering the steps taken at the regional level and the tight budgetary constraints the City of Port Colborne is under, a wage freeze may be an option for 2013.

The wage increase for councillors, which is based annually on the consumer price index, is set for 1.25% if it is to go forward. Councillors will consider the potential freeze during budget talks in the new year.

SALT SUBSTITUTE

PORT COLBORNE — Salt may have a new companion on Port Colborne's roads during the winter season.

After being contacted by manufacturers of EcoTraction, a salt alternative made from a hydrothermal volcanic mineral, the city is investigating potential uses for the product.

Evaluation of EcoTraction will take place by staff in the near future, said Ron Hanson, the city's director of engineering and operations.

PARK OFF-LIMITS

PORT COLBORNE — The city is putting up protective fencing around the new marine-themed skateboard and BMX park, which is not scheduled to open to the public until this spring.

Though the project contractor is expected to be completed on site this month, there is still work to be done at the Lock 8 Park facility before it's commissioned in 2012.

To ensure no one enters the incomplete park, and to avoid injury or incidents of vandalism, a fence will be erected around the park's perimeter at a cost of \$3,600. The area is already under video surveillance and signs will also be put up indicating so.

TRANSIT CHANGE

PORT COLBORNE — In only a few short months, the doors to Vale Health and Wellness Centre will open. In anticipation of the opening,

Port Colborne council on Monday night approved a change to the East Community bus route that ensures residents can get there.

The route, which has traditionally made its way from city hall through the city's east end, will now be changed to include a stop at the multimillion-dollar facility.

Following discussion Monday night raised by Ward 1 Coun. Dave Elliott, staff will also look at including a stop at the new skateboard and BMX park, which is scheduled to open at Lock 8 Park in the spring.

Though it does not have a designated stop at the park, the existing route does take the bus through the intersection of Mellanby Ave. and Main St. W., where park visitors can get off.

■ CANDY CANES FOR CHOIR



MARYANNE FIRTH Staff Photo
Port Colborne Mayor Vance Badawey hands out candy canes to members of the St. John Bosco Catholic School choir following the group's performance at council chambers on Monday night.



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Improv master woos Roselawn

"I started looking for really vague first and last lines or even lines where mixing the punctuation could be interesting. Changing 'Call me Ishmael' into 'Call me, Ishmael' changes the dynamic."

2012 BMW 328i with Sport Line shown

[illegible]

Mochrie explained the fundamentals of improv as the night went on, showing how teamwork can inspire good ideas and oftentimes some really bizarre ones.

see MOCHRIE | page 23

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SALE PRICE \$13,888



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Steel Gray Metallic, Loaded, Front & Rear A/C, CD, Keyless Entry, Aluminum Wheels, MP3, Tinted Windows, 115,250 Kms, SN# 22411

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SALE PRICE \$20,999



2010 COBLT LT 4DR

Silver Moss Metallic, Loaded, Air Conditioning, CD, Remote Start, 2.2 Ltrs, Aluminum Wheels, MP3, Side Air Bags, Local Trade, 86,577 Kms, SN# 22166A

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■ MOCHRIE

Authors Reading Series takes humorous turn

FROM PAGE 18

"There are two major rules in improv. One is listen; which is surprisingly seldom in real life. The second is accepting new ideas no matter what and build on them. This is the classic 'Yes, and...' rule of improv because we're so used to saying 'No, but...' When we allow ourselves to accept anything, that's when really funny things can happen."

Although his book *Not Quite the Classics* was unavailable at the event, Mochrie did bring along a short story he penned; a rendition of Dr. Seuss's classic *The Cat in the Hat*, which the comedian turned into a hilarious, if not

morbid, zombie apocalypse version.

According to Mochrie, he isn't a skilled public speaker but eventgoers would beg to differ. It was an evening that will not soon be forgotten and Mochrie definitely had audience members laughing all the way home.

The Canadian Authors Reading Series will be taking a short break over the holiday season and will return with more great Canadian authors in February.

Additionally, the Canadian Authors Reading Series will be having a large book sale from previous authors, featuring signed books available for purchase just in time for the holidays.



Since the series end of Whose Line Is It Anyway in 2006, Colin Mochrie has been full-team ahead, alongside former *Whose Line* cohorts who have had audiences rolling in the seats with their improv show appearing everywhere from small stages, Vegas and Montreal's famous comedy festival Just For Laughs. He appeared at Roselawn as part of the Canadian Authors Reading Series.

Supplied photo

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